DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 333 533 EA 022 983

AUTHOR Bamburg, Jerry; Isaacson, Nancy
TITLE A Conceptual Model of the Instructionally Effective School: Confronting the Whys, Whats and Hows.
PUB DATE Apr 91
NOTE 20p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (Chicago, IL, April 3-7, 1991).
AVAILABLE FROM Publications, Center for Effective Schools, University of Washington, College of Education, DQ-12, Miller m203, Seattle, WA 98195 ($3.00).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Change Strategies; *Communication Skills; Conflict Resolution; *Curriculum Development; *Educational Change; Elementary Secondary Education; *Instructional Effectiveness; Interpersonal Competence; Models; *Participative Decision Making; Problem Solving; *Resistance to Change; School Restructuring

ABSTRACT

Although the "what" of schooling has become clearer through a convergence of research findings, educators still do not understand the "hows" of effectively using that knowledge to make necessary changes. This paper's objectives are to argue the necessity of fundamental changes in the patterns of schooling (the "whys") and to present a conceptual model of an instructionally effective school. This model contains two elements (the "whats" and the "hows") essential for creating schools that will ensure optimal effectiveness for all students. The imperative for school reform is grounded in three perspectives: economic, sociopolitical, and moral. The instructionally effective school model is driven by the central shared belief that all children can learn. Around this belief (mission), as a chart illustrates, are four domains of knowledge: (1) the design, implementation, and evaluation of the curriculum; (2) instructional strategies; (3) effective schools research; and (4) theories of change. Surrounding the knowledge domains are the processes empowering educators to transform goals and beliefs into reality, including collaborative decision-making models, effective interpersonal communication skills, problem-solving strategies, conflict management strategies, and caring for each other as adults. The interrelationships of these components, as well as barriers to collaborative processes in schools, are discussed in detail. (37 references) (MLH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED333533

A Conceptual Model of the Instructionally Effective School: Confronting the Whys, Whats and Hows

by

Jerry Bamburg, Director
Center for Effective Schools
University of Washington
Seattle, Washington

and

Nancy Isaacson, Visiting Assistant Professor
Gonzaga University
Spokane, Washington

Presented at the annual conference
of the American Educational Research Association
Chicago, Illinois
April, 1991

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

J. Bamburg

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

EA022 783

Here is Edward Bear coming
downstairs now, bump, bump, bump,
on the back of his head. . .
It is, as far as he knows,
the only way of coming downstairs,
but sometimes he feels that
there is another way. . . if only
he could stop bumping for a moment
and think about it.

A. A. Milne,
Winnie-the-Pooh, 1926

Those of us in the school business can empathize with Edward Bear (Winnie-the-Pooh). As educators, we have become accustomed to bumping along from day to day, doing our jobs with honorable intentions and career-honed skills. Like Pooh, we sense that there must be a better way to go about this business of schooling -- indeed we are barraged on a daily basis by a public which demands it. Fortunately, if we take the time, there is 20+ years of research which can inform us about what needs to be done to transform our schools.

Why hasn't this transformation already taken place? Why are "instructionally effective schools" which ensure that all children can learn still the exception and not the rule? The reason, and the premise of this paper, is that although "the what" of schooling has become clearer through a convergence of research findings, we still do not understand "the hows" of effectively utilizing that knowledge to make the kinds of changes that are necessary (Fullan, 1982). Simply stated, the tasks of working together as caring adults to achieve the goals we set for our schools have proved to be far more complex than most consumers of school improvement research ever dreamed possible.

We have two objectives in this paper. The first is to describe our belief in the necessity for fundamental changes in the patterns of schooling "the whys." Second, we will present a conceptual model of an instructionally effective school. This model contains two elements -- both "the whats" and "the hows" -- that we feel are critical in creating schools that will ensure optimal effectiveness for all students. We shall place special emphasis on "the hows" because we find this area to be most neglected in practice.

The Imperative for School Reform

Criticisms of our public schools confront us on a daily basis. Federal, state and local officials decry the money spent on schools and the lack of return on the investment. The business community finds the employability of high school graduates questionable, and as they face increasing tax burdens, business leaders are beginning to demand a greater say in both the ends and the means of solving educational problems. The public complains about low test scores and dropout rates that are unacceptably high.

Schools are besieged from without by all manner of experts who have determined what schools should do in order to become effective. Educators are frustrated by their own apparent inability to address the needs of the students who attend their schools, students who, in many cases, have fundamentally different needs than those of even ten years ago. Despite the barrage of criticism schools endure, if they suddenly ceased to exist, we would most certainly reinvent them. The purpose of schools can be viewed from several perspectives. Three are briefly explored below.

Viewing schools from an economic perspective provides one set of lenses with which to examine the need for reforming our schools. Somewhere next to motherhood, baseball, and apple pie lies the assumption that schools are responsible for ensuring that the United States maintains its existence as an economically strong nation. For instance, following the launching of Sputnik, the federal government initiated programs to promote math and science education as a major means of catching up with the Soviets. Today, the corporate sector and federal and state governments blame educators for economic problems created by their own failure to attend to changes in the world marketplace. They pressure schools to promote skills that will enable this country to become more competitive in a global economy.

There is little doubt that if America is to survive and prosper in an information age, its workers must possess skills which will enable them to function successfully in an environment very different from that which existed when schooling in its present form was invented. Today's students -- tomorrow's work force -- come from more diverse backgrounds and possess more complex needs than in the past. These needs must be addressed if students are to process information accurately, work harmoniously with those around them, and to be successfully retrained several times during their careers. Skills such as these, which were less crucial in an industrial economy, have become vital today. The need for students to develop such skills is critical and will become even more so as our work force begins to shrink. Finally, tomorrow's schools must come to grips with the reality that America no longer has the luxury of writing off 25% of the students who will comprise that work force. Unfortunately this phenomenon which has been referred to as "the contemporary Sputnik" (Jennings, 1987) ignores the fact that schools should do more than train students to become workers.

In addition to the economic perspective there is the socio-political perspective that a democratic society cannot survive without a well-educated populace. This perspective commands considerable attention. For example, it is widely believed that citizens have the right to an education that will ensure their right to participate fully in our society (Whether or not history has affirmed this idealistic tenet is a matter of some debate). The demographic changes that employers see in the marketplace also have political implications. If citizens are not knowledgeable about this country's heritage, its culture and its democratic processes, America's future will be in jeopardy.

The final and most important reason underlying the imperative for change is a moral and ethical one. Ron Edmonds wrote in 1979,

> We can, whenever and wherever we choose, successfully teach all children whose schooling is of interest to us. We already know more than we need to do that. Whether or not we do it must finally depend upon how we feel about the fact that we haven't so far.

What was true in 1979 is even more true today. America needs educators who will dedicate themselves to fulfilling their moral and ethical responsibility to insure that all children can and do learn.

No other institution in our society plays such a powerful role in acculturating its citizens as the school. Our increasing abilities to do lasting harm to each other demand that we forge even stronger bonds among ourselves and with our global neighbors. As educators face the increasing pluralism and societal complexities of the 1990s, they must renew their moral and ethical commitment to educate **all** children, and to educate them humanely.

Do schools need to change? Do they possess the capacity to educate today's students effectively? We would answer "yes" to both questions. However, the structure of schooling developed by Horace Mann during the middle of the 19th century will not suffice as we approach the 21st century. Not only that, we need to recognize that restructuring (moving the pieces around) will also fail.

What must schools do differently in order to meet these challenges? Our view, similar to that espoused by Terry Deal, is that rather than restructure schools, we must transform them (1990). However, we propose that the transformation of schools will only be realized by reconceptualizing what schools do and how they do it. Such a transformation can only occur by successfully addressing several key issues. First, there must be agreement among educators that the need to transform our schools is real. The second issue centers around the need to reconceptualize what such a "changed" school would look like, incorporating what we know from both research and practice about the most effective ways to educate children, and how to create conditions within organizations that support change. Finally, schools must incorporate processes for renewal based on what we know about successful change processes, patterns of human interdependence, collaboration, and commitment. As Seymour Sarason (1971) so wisely reminds us, fundamental change essentially requires altering the very culture of the school.

What Does an Instructionally Effective School Look Like?

Diagram #1 visually depicts the elements which comprise what we are calling the instructionally effective school. The central shared belief that drives this model is that all children can learn. Around this belief (mission), are four domains of knowledge: 1) the design, implementation, and evaluation of the curriculum; 2) instructional strategies; 3) the research on effective schools; and 4) theories of change, all of which need to be reconceptualized in order to enable the school to better achieve its mission. They compose the "whats" that need our attention.

Finally, surrounding the domains of knowledge are the processes, "the hows", which empower us to transform goals and beliefs into reality. Collaborative decision-making models, effective interpersonal communication skills, strategies for addressing complex problems, perspectives on managing conflict, and caring for each other as adults compose the new "basic skills" needed to collectively achieve the goals schools set for themselves. These processes when linked to a reconceptualized view of the domains of knowledge and the shared belief that all children can learn, will provide schools with the increased capacity to address unique and changing problems in the future.

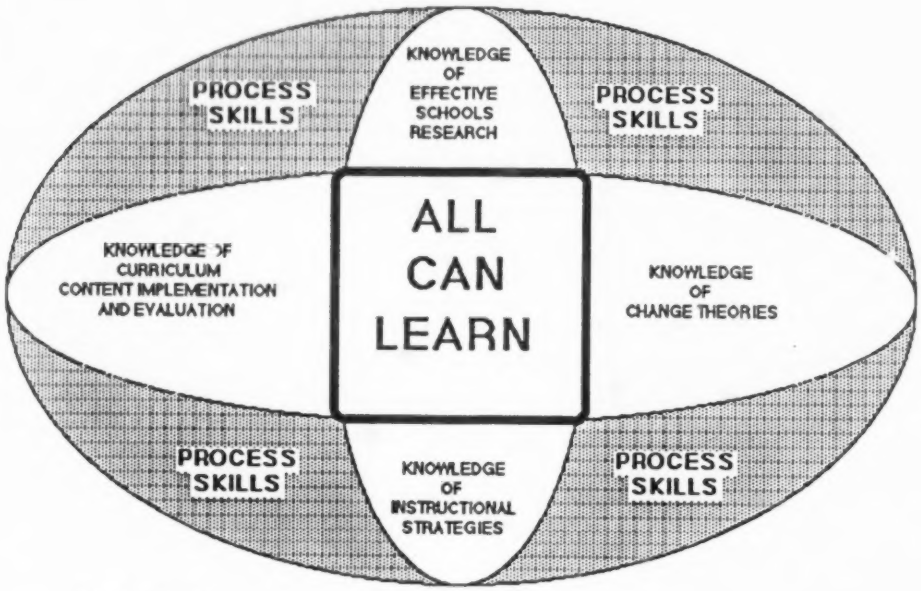

Diagram #1

The Mission: All Children Can Learn

While the domains of knowledge described in this model are important, the actions which give them meaning are even more important. It is our view that such actions can only occur in schools whose mission is driven by the belief that "All Children Can Learn." If educators do not recognize the centrality of this belief **and** accept the moral and ethical responsibility to ensure that it becomes a reality, the four knowledge domains of curriculum, instruction, effective schools research, and theories of change will have little substance and the transformation of our schools will not occur. Another way of thinking about "mission" is provided by Pascarella and Frohman (1989):

> Purpose is not simply a target that an organization chooses to aim for; it is the organization's reason for being.

The Design, Implementation and Evaluation of Curriculum

The first domain of knowledge in our instructionally effective school concerns the degree to which the design, implementation and evaluation of curriculum are viewed as integral components of an ongoing process linked to achieving the school's mission. Lack of success in effective curriculum implementation has been consistently documented for 15+ years. Many reasons for the ineffective linkage between these components have been identified, among them:

1) poor design;

2) development by outside "experts" who did not understand schooling from the insiders' perspectives;

3) little involvement in curriculum design by intended implementers;

4) inadequate (sometimes non-existent) training conducted by those with little understanding of the needs of teachers or the realities of implementation theory; and

5) lack of a long-term district commitment to the innovation (Berman and McLaughlin, 1976).

The consequence has been curriculum development efforts that frequently were either not implemented at all or so modified that they were unrecognizable (Berman and McLaughlin, 1977). The lack of success described by Berman and McLaughlin and others is exacerbated by the failure to evaluate the innovation's impact in terms of student outcomes, further weakening the tenuous connection between actions and beliefs.

All of this is not to imply that effective curriculum cannot be successfully developed and implemented. It does suggest, however, that it will only occur when

teachers are allowed to engage in discussions with each other about what ought to be done and how, when such conversations are based on an informed understanding of how children learn, and when curriculum is sensibly evaluated to determine the extent to which the desired changes in student outcomes have been achieved.

An example of how seldom teachers participate in such activities was recently illustrated by a teacher during a two-day school improvement workshop. He commented that in 25 years of teaching, that workshop represented the first opportunity to engage in a serious, extended discussion about teaching and learning with peers. While it is dangerous to generalize, this teacher probably described the experience of more teachers than we might want to acknowledge.

The rhetorical question persists: Who better to make decisions about curriculum than those who work with students on a daily basis? And, if we really believe that this is so, why do teachers seldom get this opportunity? The answer lies in the difficulties associated with changing the structure of schooling. If teachers were involved in designing the innovations they are expected to implement and could do so in a climate that supported learning new behaviors in a risk-free environment, they would be more willing to engage in activities that seek to link curriculum issues to the core belief that all children can learn. It is hard to imagine that curriculum would be as poorly designed, implemented and evaluated as it is presently if this were the case.

Instructional Strategies

Perhaps no other area of knowledge is as visible a gauge of the quality of a school than the teaching behaviors one observes there. Whether one is discussing Instructional Theory into Practice (ITIP), Teacher Effectiveness and Student Achievement (TESA), cooperative learning models, or other instructional strategies developed during the past 15 years, it is apparent that significant resources have been invested by colleges, universities and school districts to increase teachers' knowledge to teach more effectively. As a result, tremendous technical expertise currently exists and there is little question that today's teachers are more highly trained than at any time in our nation's history. Unfortunately, there is little evidence to suggest that this training has contributed to an increase in effective teaching and learning.

In A Place Called School (Goodlad, 1984), it was observed that 90% of the instruction that occurs in schools involves the teacher standing in the front of the room lecturing to passive students. While lecturing may be an efficient vehicle for transmitting large quantities of information, it provides few opportunities to assess student understanding or develop more complex levels of cognition. In addition, the reliance upon the lecture method precludes the use of other instructional strategies that may be more appropriate for students with different learning style needs. If this is the case, then why do countless teachers continue to rely on this predominant teaching method?

We believe that much of the answer to this question lies in the "gap" between the espoused mission of schools and the actual day-to-day activities that occur within classrooms. The reason for this gap is that many teachers teach the way they were taught, regardless of their training and the student learning that may or may not be occurring. It is important to stress that we do not attribute the lack of results to the lack of ability or intentions of most teachers. The results we describe are a natural outcome of settings in which educators work in isolation from each other and without opportunities to engage in meaningful dialogue about the problems they encounter, possible solutions and the desired outcomes.

If schools are to effectively educate all students, then the beliefs of those who work in them, the instructional strategies and techniques they employ, and the desired outcomes must be linked. Again, the fundamental belief that drives instruction must be the shared certainty that all can learn. This belief must be reflected in clear, visible ways to instruction that is practiced in a conscientious manner and supported by conditions which facilitate close linkages between beliefs and practice.

Effective Schools Research

The third domain of knowledge in an instructionally effective school centers upon the need for everyone associated with the school to have a clear knowledge of effective schools research, (e.g., Edmonds, 1979; Brookover, 1981; Lezotte, 1980; Andrews, 1986; Mortimore, et al, 1988). A shared knowledge of the correlates of effective schools includes:

- the presence of a clear school mission;
- strong instructional leadership by the principal;
- high expectations for students and staff;
- frequent monitoring of student progress;
- the presence of a positive learning climate;
- parent/community involvement; and
- an emphasis upon student attainment of basic skills.

Knowledge of these correlates creates a common language which allows educators to develop a shared commitment to the types of activities that should occur across the school. The development of a shared commitment based upon this common language must occur if teachers and principals are to engage in the types of activities that will promote the achievement of all students. Failure to reach consensus will almost certainly result in mere cosmetic alterations of schools, resulting in the perpetuation of the complaint that "the more things change, the more they remain the same" (Sarason, 1971).

One of the most important findings of effective schools research is the importance of disaggregating student outcome data. Unfortunately, there is little evidence to suggest that schools consciously seek such information about their efforts. For instance, while most school districts usually indicate that they have implemented "effective schools programs" in their schools, most of those same

districts do not disaggregate their achievement data and, thus, have little evidence to support the contention that their schools are effective for all students. As an example, almost half of the districts surveyed in a recent Government Accounting Office study indicated that they were implementing such programs, yet less than 10% indicated that they disaggregated student data (GAO, 1989). Schools which seek to promote equality of outcomes for all students need to disaggregate their student achievement data in order to evaluate their efforts, determine whether changes are necessary, and make the changes that are needed to teach all students more effectively.

It should be noted that we are not arguing in this paper that academic achievement is the sole measure of a school's effectiveness. Nor do we believe that norm-referenced, standardized achievement tests provide the single best measure of achievement. We do, however, maintain that an informed dialogue about 1) the beliefs of those who work in schools, 2) the daily activities that occur there, and 3) the alignment of those beliefs and activities in ways which impact student outcomes (however they are defined) can only occur when educators are willing to hold their efforts up to scrutiny (See Sirotnik, 1988, for a thorough discussion of how such a critical inquiry process might operate).

Theories of Change

As Michael Fullan (1982) tells us, it is possible to be very clear about what we want and at the same time totally inept at achieving it. We may possess both a shared vision of what an effective school looks like and knowledge of the elements which are necessary to create one, and still be impotent in causing the desired results to become a reality. The final domain of knowledge in this model embraces what Fullan calls "theories of change" **and** "theories of changing." We must develop a clear, working understanding of how planned change does and doesn't work if we are to be successful.

Our view of the instructionally effective school suggests that educators need to focus on making two fundamentally different types of changes, often simultaneously. The first is a change in how they work as individuals (when new curriculum materials, instructional strategies, and/or beliefs are involved), and the second is an alteration in group (organizational) norms and roles. The body of research about inservice and staff development describes well-intentioned attempts to change people (usually teachers) in some way. Most of this literature describes attempts to "tell teachers how to improve" (Lambert, 1989) and, more recently, telling them how to improve and then coaching them while they practice this improvement.

Past efforts to perfect educators have been based on the same assumption as our attempts to perfect students -- we "school" them. The first assumption behind such efforts is that if people receive information, their behavior and attitudes will change accordingly. As Dale Mann so eloquently told us several years ago,

> . . .we assume that if people are provided with more information about something, or if they are "educated," then they will modify their behavior accordingly (1978).

Similarly, Lambert (1989) reminds us that over-reliance on this type of adult education stems from the same basic assumption that underlies the teaching and testing of "lower-order thinking skills" with children. In both cases, we view human beings as passive receivers of information and mechanical implementers of change.

The second assumption behind this "schooling" approach is based on the belief that all teachers are identical in terms of their learning needs. We have treated the novice teacher identically to the veteran (Isaacson, 1981; Steffy, 1989); teachers in their 20s the same as those approaching retirement (Levine, 1987); all teachers as having identical goals and values (Mann, 1978); and all in terms of the same pace of development through complex change processes (Hall and Loucks, 1977). In fact, we have come to equate "inservice" and "staff development" with workshops and classes designed in spite of the needs of individual learners, rather than according to the needs of individuals.

A final reason why past attempts to "improve" teachers usually have met with limited success rests in the interpretations of these attempts by teachers themselves. Fullan (1982) maintains that it is critical to take into consideration the "subjective reality" or meaning of the change in the eyes of its intended audience. Most teachers, in their own eyes, are already working diligently toward effective instruction and school improvement. To suggest otherwise by introducing REAL WAYS to improve instruction, materials, or beliefs about schooling (i.e., the change agents') is to suggest that teachers' unique individual solutions to problems are wrong (Mann, 1978).

A second way in which educators need to be informed about how change processes do and do not work is in the area of changing organizations. In marked contrast to the other domains of knowledge (curriculum, instructional strategies, and effective schools research), the area of organizational change and transformation is one in which most educators are neither knowledgeable or skilled.

Historically, schools have been viewed as rational, tightly coupled organizations which were not particularly impacted by the environment around them. In reality, schools are complex organizations that are often non-rational and display qualities of loose-tight coupling (Weick, 1976). It is important to recognize this view of schools and the inadequacy of thinking about change in schools as a linear, rational process. Sarason (1971) cites "rational solutions" which don't fit the day-to-day reality of life in schools as the reason so many planned change efforts have failed and he urges us to pay close attention to a school's culture when applying any blueprint for improvement.

Judith Little (1981) has described major attributes of a school's organizational culture which seem to enhance readiness for improvement efforts. She suggests that "norms of collegiality and experimentation" provide a foundation for the risk-taking necessary for genuine change to occur. In a later article, Little cautions,

> On closer examination conditions that are powerful enough to introduce new ideas and practice in classrooms and to sustain "collegial" relations among teachers require a degree of organization, energy, skills, and endurance (that is) often underestimated. . . ." (1984).

One of the major factors commonly found to be a prerequisite for substantial organizational change is the presence of a pervasive sense of trust within the school.

> Trust opens the door to change. Trust in a major element -- the purpose -- enables people to accept change in small things and to yield in minor matters of style ranging from how they dress to how they carry out their tasks (Pascarella and Frohman, 1989).

Frohman also contends that the

> . . . implementation of strategy is directly affected by people's energy factor in four ways: their willingness to take risks; their willingness to relinquish control; their willingness to deviate from established practice; and their willingness to try something new (1985).

Clearly, trust does not just "happen" in any organization, but is the result of a complex mix of individuals, their individual and collective goals, their interaction patterns, the organizational setting in which they work, and the type of leadership present.

One of the many complexities associated with organizational change is that school administrators have historically been trained to "manage" organizations rather than provide "instructional leadership" (Bamburg and Andrews, 1990; Andrews and Bamburg, 1989; Smith and Andrews, 1989; Andrews, 1987; Andrews and Soder, 1986). This research has clearly demonstrated that successful schools have leaders who:

1) possess a clear vision of what the organization should be;

2) possess the ability to communicate that vision to others;

3) can secure the resources needed to enable the organization to be successful; and

4) can manage themselves effectively.

Despite this and other evidence, little has been done to provide the preservice or inservice training that principals need in these areas. In particular, the principal's abilities as an effective communicator, as someone who possesses a clear vision and who can transform that vision into a shared mission, is vital to the development of an instructionally effective school.

Seemingly contradictory research findings in the area of change in schools and other organizations points to the importance of increased participation in decision making as a key variable in developing motivation and commitment among staff members (Purkey and Smith, 1983; and Taylor, 1983; as cited by Taylor and Levine, 1991). After citing this research, Taylor and Levine describe the dilemma of balancing principal "action and initiative" on the one hand, and the sharing of organizational decision-making with teachers on the other (1991). That educators should have an opportunity to share in decision-making reflects the view of many organizational theorists (Sirotnik, 1988). Pascarella and Frohman help frame the task of separating substance from form regarding leadership:

> The more the command-and-control model erodes, the more organizations will need true leadership at the top and more leaders down the line. They need leaders who can usher in structural change that will provide for continual improvement in effectiveness. The more participative organizations become and the more they get employees committed to the corporate purpose, the more they need leadership at all levels (1989).

To summarize, educators need more than good ideas and good intentions to create instructionally effective schools. They also need a conceptual understanding of how both individuals and organizations change. Michael Fullan suggests:

> To the extent that good ideas or visions of change are not combined with equally good conceptualizations of the process of change, the ideas will be wasted (1982).

Indeed, Fullan argues, if the critical issues surrounding both the content and the process of the change are not taken into consideration, the experience ". . . can be harmful to the aduits and the children directly involved -- *more harmful than if nothing had been done*" (emphasis his).

The Process of Creating the Instructionally Effective School

Thus far, this paper has described why it is imperative to attempt a major transformation of schools as they currently exist. We have explained that this transformation must be driven by the shared belief that all students can learn. We have also described four domains of knowledge -- the "whats" -- that must be incorporated into this reconceptualized view of schools: 1) knowledge of curriculum design, implementation, and evaluation; 2) instructional strategies; 3) effective schools research; and 4) theories of change. It is our experience, however, that while many educators can engage in meaningful dialogue regarding these areas, there is little understanding about "how" they should be addressed.

Earlier in this paper, it was stated that knowledge about organizational change was fundamental to the success of any planned improvement project. However,

knowledge about how change does and doesn't happen is different from **proficiency in the skills** to make it work. It is precisely these skills -- the "hows" -- that most educators do not currently possess. We have observed countless cases in which schools (and in some cases, entire districts) have engaged in elaborate improvement attempts, only to become paralyzed at some point by the inability to carry out the very improvements they seek to make.

Schmuck and Runkel, et. al. (1972) were among the first to discuss the need for people in school organizations to possess these skills when they discussed the "problem-solving school". In the "problem-solving school", staff members work together to solve their collective problems.

> The problem-solving school finds, maintains, and uses its resources, ideas, and energy. It is conscious of the skills it needs and takes steps to improve them when necessary. It periodically reviews its goals and alters them to suit its capacities and circumstances. The subgoals. . ., which take a school along the road to a sustained capacity for solving its own problems, are to clarify communication, establish clear goals, uncover and resolve conflicts and problems in groups, make clear decisions that capture commitment, and self-consciously assess the directions the work is taking (1985).

In other words, these skills encompass the interpersonal behaviors and group norms that make collaboration "happen."

An example of such skills in use may be helpful. As educators, we are besieged by problems on a daily basis, and many of them appear unsolvable. We are so accustomed to feeling overloaded that thinking our way to solutions feels like wading through quicksand. One of the techniques Schmuck and Runkel describe is the process of "turning frustrations into problems." They suggest that educators redefine their daily issues as "frustrations," reserving the definition of a "problem" as

> . . . a discrepancy between what they diagnose to be actually happening now and what they would prefer to be happening in the future.

Once group members have learned to redefine "problems" in this fashion, they can apply the learned skill of collectively separating a problem into three parts -- the present situation, the ideal or target state, and the paths that might be taken to get from the first part to the second.

> Any of the three aspects may be unclear when school participants first feel frustration. A problem begins to take shape when participants begin to conceptualize situations and targets and explain their images of them to one another. Participants become energized when they can conceive alternative proposals to bring the situation closer to the target (Schmuck and Runkel, 1985).

Anyone who has participated in this generative process within a group knows that these authors are not exaggerating when they describe the process as "energizing." "Frustrations", once viewed as insurmountable, can often be diagnosed with one's colleagues and analyzed according to this learned problem-solving model. This process can not only help a group solve its own problems, but can also reduce individual feelings of being overwhelmed, alone, and paralyzed by complex issues.

If we examine the nature of most teachers' and principals' work, it seems absurd to suggest that they are lacking in the areas of communication, decision-making, problem-solving, and conflict resolution. The nature of classroom work involves thousands of daily communications, hundreds of decisions made and implemented, countless problems confronted and a good many solved, and no end to the conflicts faced by a teacher in any given day. The work of principaling certainly includes as many comparable communications, decisions, problems, and conflicts. One might ask how we can possibly assert that these educators are unskilled in the processes of decision-making and implementing, problem-solving, conflict resolution, etc.

We believe that the process skills (decision making, problem solving, conflict resolution, etc.) teachers and principals use, when the adult is the authority figure and students are subordinate to that authority, are fundamentally different from how one would utilize those same skills with a group of peers. Decision-making, for example, is quite a different phenomenon when it is accomplished privately, invisibly, and rapidly within one's mind when interacting with 25 children than it is when sitting with 19 colleagues attempting to agree on how a report card should be designed. In fact, it may very well be that this private, individual decision-making style actually interferes with the process of team/group decision-making. The collaborative process requires that individuals set aside their own preferences and styles at times in the best interests of the group. Yet, the current literature is dominated by collaborative models and site-based decision structures which **assume that educators already possess these group process skills**, a contention with which we disagree.

Barriers to Collaborative Group Processes in Schools

Perhaps the most fundamental change we are suggesting includes the learning of these collaborative skills by educators as a necessary first step in the transformation of schools. We are very much aware that this suggestion constitutes a major change in and of itself; principals' and especially teachers' work has traditionally been characterized by isolation and autonomy from the work of other adults (Lortie, 1975). However, the mastery of these collaborative skills is necessary to provide educators with the tools they need to address the other elements described in this paper.

This is not a new suggestion (see, for example, Schmuck and Runkel, et. al., 1972; Schmuck, Runkel, Arends and Arends, 1977; Schmuck and Runkel, 1985). Why, then, have these process skills not become common in our schools? We think there are several reasons, three of which we will attempt to describe. First, many studies have been done on the psychological styles, or attributes of educators. One such model, provided by Keirsey and Bates (1984), characterizes the majority of

educators as people who value service to others, stability, nurturing, order, responsibility, and dependability. Individuals with these characteristics are often very uncomfortable with conflict and will avoid it if possible. Collaboration, by its very nature, includes a certain amount of conflict. In fact, it is inevitable. Sensing this, many educators may prefer the false security of working alone rather than face the painful uncertainties of participating in efforts to forge group agreement on complex issues.

A second reason why collaborative group processes are seldom put into practice in schools is that very few educators have had any formal training in the development and use of such skills. Indeed, many never heard of such practices during their preservice or inservice education. Occasionally, administrators have opportunities to participate in workshops on topics such as "building consensus," "conflict management," or "team building." However, these types of opportunities are rare in the experiences of teachers. When such activities are available, they are too brief to teach new and complex behavior patterns; in addition, they are usually offered to interested, diverse participants, not intact work groups. Individuals, even those in leadership capacities, most often experience only limited success in transferring their new skills to the work setting by themselves. Further, if new behaviors do not fit within acceptable group norms, their continued use, even by the persevering, is often short-lived.

A final reason why group process skills are not commonly practiced in schools is a time/resources factor. Many people (including some educators) believe that teachers and principals are just not "working" if they are not in the presence of students. Most teachers' contracts specify two kinds of "time": contact time (with students) and preparation time; some contracts also limit the amount of time administrators can require teachers to be in meetings. Collaborative processes take **lots** of time, time which, for many teachers, does not exist within the contracted work day. Some districts have attempted to remedy this by offering extended pay for additional teacher time. The disadvantages of this approach are that participating employees must "tack on" additional hours to a full work day or work week resulting in exhausted individuals struggling to learn and practice complex new skills. Many teachers who cannot or will not spend such additional time because of other priorities in their lives are thus excluded from the process.

Another popular alternative is to relieve teachers from direct instructional duties during the regular work day through the use of substitute teachers. Difficulties with this approach are that substitutes often do not or are not allowed to teach "regular" lessons, resulting in discontinuity for students. In addition, even in the best of situations, the teacher is "punished" by the extra work of preparing for a substitute and often "mopping up" with students afterwards. Principals, who do not usually have substitutes in their absence, are "rewarded" for increased time out of their offices with stacks of messages and a myriad of other problems upon their return. The principal's frequent choice is either to resolve these problems in a timely manner by the use of more personal time, or leave them unresolved, guaranteeing that at least some will intensify before they're addressed.

Given the difficulties we have described, traditional top-down decision-making processes are certainly easier to implement. However, there is abundant evidence that such approaches are also largely ineffective in creating and sustaining major improvements in our schools. Providing educators with quality time to learn and opportunities to then practice collaborative processes continues to present a major obstacle to school improvement. However, they also represent education's greatest opportunity for sustained lasting change.

The skills we refer to as "the hows" clearly need to be taught to and practiced by intact work groups of educators in schools. We believe that such training must become part of the legitimate staff development agenda of a district. Instead of only training individuals, groups must be seen as the collective "clients" of staff development efforts. The skills we advocate encompass collective behaviors which allow staffs to collaboratively choose what they want to do, identify the ways they want to accomplish it, select the evidence by which they can judge their success, and take care of each other in the process. Together, these skills become the means by which educators can create, nurture, and sustain the kinds of schools they want.

Conclusion

We believe that public schools should be places where all students can and do learn. We also believe that in order to create instructionally effective schools we must reconceptualize "what" schools do and "how" they do it. The whats include four domains of knowledge -- curriculum, instructional strategies, effective schools research and theories of change -- that must be examined. Further, as educators seek to address each of these domains they must do so with the understanding that the domains do not exist in isolation from each other. In essence, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

Finally, we have described what we consider to be a missing piece in much of today's dialogue about the restructuring of schools, namely -- the importance of the actual collaborative process skills that are necessary for lasting change to occur. We believe that the committed practice of these skills -- the hows -- cannot occur as long as the emphasis is upon restructuring. Rather, such changes, to quote Terry Deal, can only take place in an environment which facilitates changes in how educators think about what takes place in schools. It is only then that educators will be able to successfully address the **whys**, **whats** and **hows** of schools. It is only then that we will be able to transform our schools.

We realize that we have bitten off a pretty big bite in our efforts to describe the whys, the whats, and the hows that must exist in what we have referred to as "the instructionally effective school." We are ambitious, not because we have all the answers or because the issues that we have raised will be easy to address. Rather, like Lezotte (1989) we believe that schools must move beyond merely tinkering with the illusions of change. Changing the structures of schooling -- "the whats" -- without also addressing the "whys" and "hows" will cause us to once again fall short of making the substantive changes that are needed. Our hope is that the conceptual model of an instructionally effective school presented in this paper will contribute to moving the dialogue beyond the restructuring of schools to more fundamental questions about the transformation of schools.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ANDREWS, RICHARD L., ROGER SODER and DAN JACOBY. "Principal Roles, Other In-School Variables, and Academic Achievement by Ethnicity and SES." Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association, April, 1986.

ARENDS, RICHARD, RICHARD HERSH and JACK TURNER. "Inservice Education and the Six O'Clock News," OSSC Bulletin, Vol. 21, No. 7, March 1978.

BAMBURG, JERRY D. and RICHARD L. ANDREWS. "Instructional Leadership, School Goals, and Student Achievement: Exploring the Relationship Between Means and Ends." Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association, 1990.

BAMBURG, JERRY D. and RICHARD L. ANDREWS. "Putting Effective Schools Research to Work: The Process of Change and the Role of the Principal." School Effectiveness and School Improvement, (edited by Bert Creemers, Ton Peters, and Dave Reynolds), Rockland, Massachusetts: Swets & Zeitlinger, 1989.

BENNIS, WARREN and BURT NANUS. Leaders: The Strategies for Taking Charge, New York, New York, Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., 1985.

BERMAN, PAUL and MILBRAY McLAUGHLIN. "Implementation of Educational Innovation." Educational Forum 40 (1976): No. 3, 347-370.

BROOKOVER, WILBUR. Effective Secondary Schools, Philadelphia: Research for Better Schools, 1981.

EDMONDS, RON. "Effective Schools for the Urban Poor," Educational Leadership 37 (October, 1979): 15-18, 20-24.

FROHMAN, A.L. "Energy Factors: Implementing Your Strategic Plan," in W.D. Guth (ed.), Handbook of Business Strategy. Boston, Massachusetts: Warren, Gorham & Lamont, 1985.

FULLAN, MICHAEL. The Meaning of Educational Change, New York, New York: Teachers College Press, 1982.

GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE. Effective Schools Programs: Their Extent and Characteristics, Gaithersburg, Maryland: General Accounting Office, 1989.

GOODLAD, JOHN I. A Place Called School, New York, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1984.

HALL, GENE and SUSAN LOUCKS. "Developmental Model for Determining Whether the Treatment is Actually Implemented," American Educational Research Journal, 1977, Vol. 14, No. 3, pp. 263-276, 1977.

ISAACSON, NANCY. "Secondary Teachers' Perceptions of Personal and Organizational Support During Induction to Teaching," unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Oregon, 1981.

JENNINGS, JOHN F. "The Sputnik of the Eighties," Phi Delta Kappan, Oct. 1987, pp. 104-109.

JOYCE, BRUCE and MICHAEL McKIBBIN. "Teacher Growth States and School Environments," Educational Leadership, Nov. 1982, pp. 36-41.

KEIRSEY, DAVID AND MARILYN BATES. Please Understand Me: Character and Temperament Types, Delmar, California: Promethus Nemesis Book Co., 1984.

LAMBERT, LINDA. "End of an Era of Staff Development," Educational Leadership, Sept. 1989, pp. 78-81.

LEVINE, SARAH L. "Understanding Life Cycle Issues: "A Resource for School Leaders, " Journal of Education, Nov. 1982, pp. 36-41.

LEZOTTE, LAWRENCE, D.V. HATHAWAY, S.K. MILLER, J. PASSALACQUA, and W. BROOKOVER. School Learning Climate and Student Achievement: A Social Systems Approach to Increased Student Learning, Tallahassee, Florida: National Teacher Corps, Florida State University Foundation, 1980.

LITTLE, JUDITH. "Norms of Collegiality and Experimentation: Work Place Conditions of School Success," American Educational Research Journal, Vol. 19, pp. 342-360, 1982.

LITTLE, JUDITH. "Seductive Images and Organizational Realities in Professional Development," Teachers College Record, Vol. 86, No. 1, Fall 1981, pp. 84 - 102, 1984.

LORTIE, D.C. School Teacher: A Sociological Study, Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1975.

MANN, DALE. "The Politics of Inservice," Theory Into Practice, Vol. XVII, No. 3, June 1978, pp. 212-217.

MILNE, A.M. Winnie-the-Pooh, 1926.

MORTIMORE, PETER, PAMELA SAMMONS, LOUISE STOLL, DAVID LEWIS and RUSSELL ECOB. School Matters. Berkeley, California: The University of California Press, 1988.

PASCARELLA, PERRY and A. L. FROHMAN. The Purpose-Driven Organization, San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass, Inc. (1989).

PURKEY, STEWART C. and MARSHALL W. SMITH. "Effective Schools - A Review," Elementary School Journal, March 1983, pp. 427-452.

SARASON, SEYMOUR. The Culture of the School and the Problem of Change, Boston, Massachusetts: Allyn and Bacon, 1982 (2nd ed.).

SCHMUCK, RICHARD A., PHILIP J. RUNKEL, JANE H. ARENDS, and RICHARD I. ARENDS. The Second Handbook of Organization Development in Schools, Palo Alto, California: Mayfield Publishing Co., 1977.

SCHMUCK, RICHARD A. and PHILIP J. RUNKEL. The Handbook of Organization Development in Schools, 3rd ed., Prospect Heights, Illinois: Waveland Press, Inc., 1985.

SCHMUCK, RICHARD A., PHILIP J. RUNKEL, STEVEN L. SATUREN, RONALD T. MARTELL and C. BROOKLYN DERR. Handbook of Organization Development in Schools, Palo Alto, California: National Press Books, 1972.

SIROTNIK, Kenneth and R.A. Clark. "School-Centered Decision Making and Renewal," Phi Delta Kappan 69, No. 9 (May 1988): 660-664.

STEFFY, BETTY E. Career Stages of Classroom Teachers, Lancaster, Pennsylvania: Technomic Publishing Co., Inc., 1989.

TAYLOR, BARBARA O. and DANIEL U. LEVINE. "Effective Schools Projects and School-Based Management," Phi Delta Kappan, Jan. 1991; 394-397.

TAYLOR, BARBARA O. "Metasensemaking: How Effective Principals Accomplish School Improvement," paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Education Research Association, San Francisco, 1986.